GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:946
ANSWERED ON:09.03.2005
SHORT ROUTE TO KAILASH-MANSAROVAR
Chouhan Shri Shivraj Singh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to construct/explore any short route for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken/proposed to be taken for the safety of the pilgrims?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has proposed to the Chinese side on several occasions in recent years opening of an alternative route to Kailash Mansarovar through Demchok in Jammu & Kashmir or Shipki La in Himachal Pradesh. The Chinese have cited difficulty in opening these routes on the ground that it would involve travel over longer distances on their side through difficult terrain, with poor road conditions and lack of proper infrastructure for accommodation and communications.

(c) The selection of yatris for Kailash Mansarovar Yatra is done after an elaborate medical check-up so that only those who are found physically and medically fit are allowed to undertake the Yatra. During the course of the Yatra, facilities provided by the Government to the yatris include free medical assistance, security and escort cover by the Indo-Tibetan Border Police till the Lipulekh Pass on the Indian side, communication links with China, and provision of satellite phone to the Liaison Officer for each batch of yatris for use during emergency throughout the Yatra. A Liaison Officer is attached by the Government with each batch of yatris, who is responsible for their general welfare.